

STATES OF JERSEY



GROUVILLE SCHOOL: PARKING FACILITIES (P.24/2014) – COMMENTS

Presented to the States on 31st March 2014
by the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Although these comments are being presented in my capacity as Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, I wish to make it clear that they have been prepared in consultation with the Ministers for Transport and Technical Services and Treasury and Resources, as well as the Council of Ministers as a whole.

These comments should not be taken to represent the views of the Minister for Planning and Environment who, in line with usual practice, will determine any planning applications on their own merits and in accordance with the Island Plan and supporting policies.

Following discussions with the Connétable of Grouville, I wish to advise members that I am prepared to support the proposition, subject to certain conditions. In accepting this proposition, I would like to make it clear that I consider the situation with regard to Grouville School to be wholly exceptional, particularly at the start and end of the school day. I have visited the site with the Connétable of Grouville at collection time, and have seen for myself the large numbers of cars which are parked on the roads immediately adjacent to the school and further afield. This situation is highly unsatisfactory, particularly as the road network also has to cater for the circulation of general traffic in addition to parents collecting their children. By acceding to this proposition, a large proportion of parental vehicles will be taken off the roads and will thereby significantly ease the flow of traffic.

Working closely with Transport and Technical Services, my department has already developed plans that would increase the number of parking spaces on the school grounds from 25 to 48. This would be done by widening the track which runs along the western side of the school playing-field and by having vehicles parked at an angle instead of end-to-end.

In accepting this proposition, I am making a commitment to engage in further talks with the Connétable of Grouville to provide the remaining 37 spaces that are the subject of the proposition, the details of which will be determined in consultation also with Jersey Property Holdings, Transport and Technical Services and the Planning Department. Outline plans have been drawn up in response to the proposition which would provide a further 17–25 spaces in a new parking area at the northern end of the playing-field. These plans are working drawings at this stage, as they have been prepared at short notice in response to the proposition, and they will need to be subject to a proper survey in order to establish their impact on existing facilities and boundaries. Creating these additional spaces will inevitably encroach upon play areas that are currently being used by pupils for sports and recreational activities, and I will need to be satisfied that the new parking areas will be acceptable in terms of the impact on pupils.

Members may already be aware that a site which lies immediately adjacent to the playing-field (and to the north of the main school building) is currently the subject of a planning application. This is Field 263A, Grouville, which is currently in private ownership, and consent is being sought to build a dwelling on the northern part of the field, and to transfer the southern part of the field to the States of Jersey in order that it may be used for a netball court and outdoor play area. The southern part of Field 263A measures 1,400 square metres, and its acquisition is strongly supported by Education, Sport and Culture as it would significantly improve the school's outdoor facilities, as well as helping to bring the school up towards the minimum recommended area

requirements for a school of this size. The school currently has 16,403 square metres of outdoor space, which is 1,421 square metres below the recommended minimum level of 17,824 square metres for a school with a planned capacity of 394 pupils. The provision of additional parking would therefore be conditional upon planning approval being granted to the transfer of the southern part of Field 263A for this purpose, as the school will otherwise be left with an even greater shortfall in outdoor areas as a result of new parking facilities.

Financial and manpower implications

Transport and Technical Services has confirmed that funding will be available for the first phase of the additional project, i.e. to increase the current provision from 25 to 48 spaces.

Further funds would need to be obtained in order to provide additional parking spaces above this total, and this will be discussed with Ministers of the relevant departments, with a view to ensuring that works can be completed within the 9 months referred to in the proposition, subject to the necessary planning approvals being obtained.